DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 356 996 SO 023 045

AUTHOR Parker, Franklin
TITLE Pres. Clinton's Education Priorities: Early 1993 Indications.
PUB DATE 5 Feb 93
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Apprenticeships; Dislocated Workers; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *National Competency Tests; Public Education; Retraining; Skill Development; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Clinton (Bill); Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

Educators anticipate bold new education reform initiatives from President Bill Clinton and his Education Secretary, Richard Riley. A priority project is college tuition loans, repayable through voluntary public service jobs. The President also supports increased funding for the Head Start Program and money for a national apprenticeship program for high school students with specific job skills. Labor Secretary Robert Reich favors job skills training for displaced workers and for the 75% of youth who do not earn college degrees. President Clinton is expected to back national standards and testing for the basic school subjects. A family leave bill also remains high on the Democrats' agenda. The nomination of Richard Riley as Clinton's Education Secretary was followed by easy confirmation in the Senate. Riley joined Clinton in expressing support for family choice in public schools and opposition to the voucher system of funding private education. And Riley, like Clinton, favors improved early childhood education and better social services for the young, increased cooperation between educational agencies, and moves toward national standards and testing of basic school subjects. Another important factor in the President's efforts to improve education is First Lady Hillary Clinton. She has directed Arkansas efforts to upgrade education and reduce infant mortality. Education reform seems likely to be front and center during the Clinton presidency. (LBG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED356996

Pres. Clinton's Education Priorities: Early 1993 Indications

by

Franklin Parker

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

FRANKLIN PARKER

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 023 045

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Franklin Parker
Education and Psychology
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC 28723

February 5, 1993

Pres. Clinton's Education Priorities: Early 1993 Indications

by Franklin Parker

Educators anticipate **bold new education reform initiatives** from President Bill Clinton and his Education Secretary, ex-governor of South Carolina Richard W. Riley. Their likely education priorities are indicated from their successes as school reform governors, from Clinton's campaign promises, from his education transition team statements, and from education recommendations in the 1992 Mandate for Change, issued by the Progressive Policy Institute, the policy arm of the Democratic Leadership Council, which Clinton founded and chaired. These education reform initiatives, being fashioned into bills to be debated in Congressional education committees, will likely be revised to reflect compromises between what Clinton wants and opponents will support.

A pilot project is now pending for a Clinton priority, **college tuition loans**, to be repaid through voluntary public service jobs in teaching, social work, police work, or other needed services in inner city and other troubled areas. Trading a college loan for a year or two of voluntary work in national, state, and local public service jobs at a lower salary will cost, by one estimate, $12 billion a year. Clinton believes that under his plan the present high rate of defaults on college loan repayment will decline and that this saving will help finance his public service plan.

Not yet known is how many college loan borrowers are willing to live and work in inner cities or poor rural areas at subsistence level; the cost required to train, transport, and keep records on them; or the cost of their reduced national service job salaries. Clinton's Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich and others want the Internal Revenue Service to collect tuition loans at different rates, depending on borrowers' earnings after graduation.

College loan programs have been more expensive than their backers first intended. Yale University used its own money to make 3,602 income-contingent loans during 1973-78, but soon stopped. The program was more expensive than expected. Getting tax return information from borrowers to determine their income also proved difficult. In assigning the repayment rate, it was difficult to factor in a spouse's income. A similar federal loan program in the late 1980s was also an administrative nightmare. Drawing up regulations for Clinton's college loan plan, it is believed, will take a year, with the first loans made about spring 1994.[1] Some supporters talk of eventually extending the Clinton college student loan program downward to include high school students and upward to include graduate students.

Meanwhile, Congress's bipartisan National Commission on Responsibility for Financing Postsecondary Education recommended on February 3, 1993, that loans averaging $14,000, regardless of family income, be made available directly to college student borrowers and not through banks. A community service repayment option, like the Clinton proposal, will forgive part of the loan in exchange

for work in disadvantaged communities or in public service jobs. Senator Claiborne Pell (D, RI), after whom the Pell grants to college students are named, and other members of Congress support the recommendations. Total federal aid for college loans is now $20 billion annually, twice the amount a decade ago. In the last decade public college costs rose 120 percent; private college costs rose 150 percent.[2]

Clinton wants also to increase **Head Start** funding from the current level of $2.8 billion yearly to $13 billion by fiscal year 1998. His campaign pledge of a **national apprenticeship** program will benefit high school students with specific vocational and technical job skills, and also will help the national economy. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich has also urged **job skills training** for displaced workers and for the 75 percent of youth who do not earn college degrees. He also wants to merge for efficiency the more than 100 current and sometimes competing federal job training programs.[3]

Clinton sees merit in and will likely urge **national standards and testing** of basic school subjects, initiated by the Bush Administration's Education 2000 Plan and incorporated into Senate Bill 2, that died in the 102nd (1992) Congress.

To strengthen the family, Clinton signed into law on February 5, 1993, a **family leave bill** requiring employers with 50 or more workers to grant up to 12 weeks' unpaid leave each year for an employee to attend to the illness of a child, parent, or spouse. This legislation, twice passed by Congress and twice vetoed by President Bush, has been high on the Democrats' agenda. Republican senators tried but failed to block the bill by tacking on an amendment to bar homosexuals from the military.[4]

South Carolina's Democratic governor during 1979-87, **Richard W. Riley** was easily confirmed by the Senate as **U.S. Education Secretary** in late January 1993. He was praised at confirmation hearings for his record as a consensus builder in reforming schools. South Carolina was the first state in the 1980s to enact and fund comprehensive education reform legislation. He set higher standards for promotion, for high school and college graduation, and for college entrance. He got business and civic groups to back the state's Education Improvement Act of 1984 by raising $240 million a year with a one cent state sales tax increase. The act strengthened school programs, permitted the state's takeover of inferior school districts, and used advanced standing tests in math and literature to put successful high school students into advanced college courses. Riley's education reform success in South Carolina made him Clinton's mentor and model in improving Arkansas schools.

Despite party differences, outgoing U.S. Education Secretary and former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander praised Riley as his successor. Alexander recalled that he, Riley, and Clinton had led the National Governors' Association's education reforms in the 1980s. The prime motive then was, through better schools, to attract industrial firms and jobs to their states. The prime motive now is to improve U.S. international economic competitiveness. Under Clinton and Riley, Alexander cautioned, "you will hear less about break-the-mold schools and about choice."[5]

Riley, like Clinton, said he supports parental choice of public schools. "I oppose the voucher system of using public funds for private schools. It pulls the rug out from under public school system."[6] He would not endorse a federal mandate to equalize school district expenditures, preferring instead to

allow federal leadership "to arouse people's feelings toward [achieving] equity." In supporting national testing, Riley said, "There is a clear place in a results-oriented education system for good assessments." He declined to specify Clinton's stand on race-based college scholarships; said he favored college student loans given through the institutions, rather than through bank loans; and said that Clinton's college student loan proposal, repaid through community service, will not reduce Pell Grants and other federal grant programs.

Riley said that his (and Clinton's) priorities include improving early childhood education, giving children more social services, assuring more efficient cooperation among federal agencies with education interests, and encouraging the movement toward national standards and testing of basic school subjects. The 59-year-old Riley will be less confrontational than were two recent Republican education secretaries, William J. Bennett and Lamar Alexander. Riley's low-key style comes partly from a 15-year illness, from age 21, when he had spondylitis, a painful fusing of bones of the back, which left him stooped and his neck immobile. Despite the handicap, he joined his father's Columbia, SC, law firm; lectured on political science at his alma mater, Furman University, Greenville, SC; served in the South Carolina Senate during 1962-76; and helped lead a policy group to aid disadvantaged children. When Greenville, SC, schools were ordered to desegregate in 1970, he led a citizens' group that oversaw peaceful integration. Riley's four children have attended integrated public schools.

Although heads a U.S. Education Department that spends only 6 cents of every dollar spent on U.S. education, Riley is expected to use his office to cajole and convince Congress, educators, and the public of the urgent need to significantly restructure American education.[7]

While Clinton as governor is credited with Arkansas's education advances, the **Hillary-Bill Clinton education team** was crucial in his success. A Wellesley (Mass.) College graduate, 1969, and Yale Law School graduate, 1973, Hillary Clinton headed the Arkansas Education Standards Commission, 1983-84, which held hearings in each of Arkansas's 75 counties, succeeded in getting smaller classes, an enriched curriculum, a longer school day and year, student and teacher testing for competency and promotion, mandatory kindergartens, elementary school counselors, the merging of inefficient school districts, and tougher high school and college graduation requirements. She served on the Governors' Task Force on Infant Mortality, 1984-85, and chaired the Children's Defense Fund, 1986-92. Hillary Clinton's persistent stands on Arkansas education reform ultimately won support and admiration. One Arkansas state representative said of her, "I think we've elected the wrong Clinton." Although she has been given leadership in reforming national health care, many believe that her educational reform advice will also be sought and heard.[8]

Education reform seems likely to be front and center during the Clinton presidency.[9]

References

1. New York Times, November 25, 1992, p. B7.
2. New York Times, February 3, 1993, p. A8.
3. Education Week, XII, 16 (January 13, 1993), p. 33; U.S. News and World Report, CXIV, 3 (January 25, 1993), pp. 60-67; Business Week, 3282 (September 7, 1992), p. 30.

4. New York Times, January 31, 1993, pp. 16f; New York Times, February 3, 1993, p. A14; USA Today, February 3, 1993, p. 5A.
5. Education Week, XII, 16 (January 13, 1993), pp. 1, 41.
6. Education Week, XII, 17 (January 20, 1993), pp. 17, 21; Ibid., XII, 12 (November 25, 1992), p. 19; Ibid., XII, 16 (January 13, 1993), pp. 1, 41; Ibid., XII, 18 (February 3, 1993), pp. 44, 34, 35; New York Times, December 22, 1992, p. C20; USA Today, December 22, 1992, p. 2A; Ibid, December 28, 1992, p. 2A; NEA Now, December 28, 1992, p. 1.
7. Education Week, XII, 17 (January 20, 1993), pp. 17, 21; NEA Now (January 25, 1993), p. 1.
8. USA Today, January 27, 1993, p. 11A.
9. See also Education Week, XII, 11 (November 18, 1992), pp. 1, 25; Ibid., XI, 40 (August 5, 1992), pp. 1, 46; Ibid., XII, 16 (January 13, 1993), pp.1, 40; Ibid., XII, 17 (January 20, 1993), p. 26.